UNITED ANGLERS
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July 25, 2007

Hon. Susan Golding, Chair
Blue Ribbon Task Force
MLPA Initiative
c/o California Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: **Draft Master Plan for MLPA project**

Dear Mayor Golding:

United Anglers of Southern California along with our partner organizations Coastside Fishing Club, American Sportfishing Association, Southern California Marine Association, and the Sportfishing Association of California are dedicated to an conservation-oriented implementation of the Marine Life Protection Act built upon the best readily available science.

To that end, the partnership suggests adding the attached National Academy of Science committee wording as proposed additions to the draft Master Plan under the section entitled "Marine Protected Areas Generally" beginning on page 10 of the current draft.

The current draft leads a reader to some incorrect conclusions regarding the current state of science surrounding the use of marine protected areas. The proposed change takes a more balanced look at the conclusions of the NAS committee by being more inclusive. The proposed changes contain four elements we consider crucial in considering the use of marine protected areas. First is a brief statement of purpose and historical land precedence. We believe this is an important element because it points us to our nation's history and how this nation led the world in programs that both protected our environment while assuring our quality of life. Second is a list of definitions that the NAS committee found useful in linking the objectives of marine protected areas to the current state of science. This change is important because California has legislatively defined types of marine protected areas in a different manner than the rest of the world. Third, the primary recommendations by the National Academy of Sciences related to the design, sizing, location, zoning, and networking of marine protected areas is included. Finally, fourth, there is the primary statement from the committee conclusions explaining the zoning and networking of MPAs.

We believe that it is important to recognize that science endorses the use of marine protected areas where low impact activities like managed recreational fishing and tourism are allowed to continue in a zoning plan which also includes zones that will exclude most or all of these types of activities. The NAS committee states in their report that such an approach will advance conservation objectives that ecological reserves (fully protected areas) cannot do alone. We also believe that California law in the Ocean Protection Act recognizes the need for recreational access and use of the ocean and ocean resources within marine protected areas where consistent with conservation. We further believe MPAs with managed recreational activities can enable adaptive management via direct comparison to other areas that prohibit the activity. Such approaches will far more rapidly help us learn what kinds of activities have impacts on ecosystems.

There is much more in the 272 page NAS committee report that could have been included in the change. However, in the interest of brevity we believe this change captures important elements otherwise missing in the draft master plan and provides a basis for further discussion on these matters as we move forward with regional goals and objectives and the selection of areas suitable for consideration as marine protected areas.

Sincerely,

Tom Raftican
President
United Anglers of Southern California

Cc: Ryan Broddrick, Director, California Department of Fish and Game
Richard Rogers, President, Fish and Game Commission
Mike Chrisman, Secretary for Resources

1 attachment

Changes for Section Titled "Marine Protected Areas Generally" beginning on Page 10 of 4-13-07 draft of Master Plan for Marine Protected Areas.

After section beginning with:
Marine Protected Areas Generally
California is able to take advantage of several decades of experience and study regarding MPAs elsewhere in the United States and abroad, as well as within its own waters.

In 2001,for instance, a committee of the National Academy of Sciences released its report *Marine Protected Areas: Tools for Sustaining Ocean Ecosystems*. Like other reports of the National Academy of Sciences, this report can be considered an authoritative general review of the science of marine protected areas (OMB 2004).

Insert: (as replacement for discussion on NAS committee report)
Among other things, this expert panel had comments in the following areas:

The National Academy of Sciences study described a rationale and precedence for the use of MPAs :

> Given the growing perception that current management of marine resources and habitats is insufficient, interest is growing in approaches to ensure the continuing viability of marine ecosystems. Over the past century, concern about the rapid loss of wilderness lands led to establishment of protected areas, reserves, and parks in terrestrial ecosystems where human activities are much restricted or at least curtailed. Generally, the objective in these areas is to protect or restore ecosystems, to preserve the natural beauty of the landscape, and to support the survival of native species. The public accepts these concepts and cherishes protected areas such as national parks and wildlife refuges. Yet this approach has not transferred to the marine environment. The effectiveness of marine reserves and marine protected areas (MPAs) is debated passionately by advocates and detractors, even though more than a thousand MPAs have been established around the globe. Similar to terrestrial protected areas, advocates promote their benefits as insurance against overexploitation, conservation of biodiversity, and protection of habitat. Their potential as tools for fisheries management is recognized by many scientists (Bohnsack, 1998). However, few MPAs have been evaluated critically to determine to what extent they benefit exploited species.[1]

The same National Academy of Science study provided simplified definitions of MPAs in order to provide a quick reference to the general goals of MPAs in their report:

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[1] Committee on the Evaluation, Design, and Monitoring of Marine Reserves and Protected Areas in the United States
Ocean Studies Board
Commission on Geosciences, Environment, and Resources
National Research Council, *Marine Protected Areas: Tools for Sustaining Ocean Ecosystems*, Washington DC: National Academy Press, 2001, p. 11

The recommendations from this study echo the goals of the MLPA particularly with regards to location, size and zoning. Those were as follows:

> MPA Design
> Effective implementation of marine reserves and protected areas depends on participation by the community of stakeholders in developing the management plan. Federal and state agencies will need to provide resources, expertise, and coordination to integrate individual MPAs into the frameworks for coastal and marine resource management in order to meet goals established at the state, regional, national, or international level. The lead agency will need to first identify all stakeholders, both on- and off-site, and then utilize methods of communication appropriate for various user groups.
>
> Identifying Locations
> Choice of sites for MPAs should be integrated into an overall plan for marine area management that optimizes the level of protection afforded to the marine ecosystem as a whole because the success of MPAs depends on the quality of management in the surrounding waters.
>
> Determining Size
> The optimal size of marine reserves and protected areas should be determined for each location by evaluating the conservation needs and goals, quality and amount of critical habitat, levels of resource use, efficacy of other management tools, and characteristics of the species or biological communities requiring protection.
>
> Designating Zones and Designing Networks
> Zoning should be used as a mechanism for designating sites within an MPA to provide the level of protection appropriate for each management goal. [3]

The National Academy of Sciences study also concluded on how MPAs of various designations might work together to achieve various goals expected of MPAs:

> In many instances, multiple management goals will be included in an MPA plan and zoning can be used to accomplish some of these goals. These zones may include "ecological reserves" to protect biodiversity and provide undisturbed areas for research, "fishery reserves" to restore and protect fish stocks, and "habitat restoration areas" to facilitate recovery of damaged seabeds.

Remainder of section to remain with recent Department recommended changes starting with:

Since the National Academy of Sciences report, a vigorous discussion among scientists and
decision makers has explored the benefits and costs of MPAs.

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[3] *Ibid*, p. 4-7

There have been numerous attempts to develop terms and definitions to encompass the array of applications of MPAs in marine conservation. In principle, the committee accepts the classification scheme developed by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN, see Appendix F) which applies to both terrestrial and marine protected areas (IUCN, 1994). The six categories in this scheme provide a mechanism for assessing the status of protected areas internationally. However, the specificity provided by the IUCN classification makes it impractical for quick reference to the more general goals of MPAs described in this report. Therefore, the committee defined a simplified list of terms for the various types of protected areas, listed here in order of increasing levels of protection:

- Marine Protected Area—a discrete geographic area that has been designated to enhance the conservation of marine and coastal resources and is managed by an integrated plan that includes MPA-wide restrictions on some activities such as oil and gas extraction and higher levels of protection on delimited zones, designated as fishery and ecological reserves within the MPA (see below). Examples include the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary and marine areas in the National Park system, such as Glacier Bay.

- Marine Reserve—a zone in which some or all of the biological resources are protected from removal or disturbance. This includes reserves established to protect threatened or endangered species and the more specific categories of fishery and ecological reserves described below.

- Fishery Reserve—a zone that precludes fishing activity on some or all species to protect critical habitat, rebuild stocks (long-term, but not necessarily permanent, closure), provide insurance against overfishing, or enhance fishery yield. Examples include Closed Areas I and II on Georges Bank, implemented to protect groundfish.

- Ecological Reserve—a zone that protects all living marine resources through prohibitions on fishing and the removal or disturbance of any living or non-living marine resource, except as necessary for monitoring or research to evaluate reserve effectiveness. Access and recreational activities may be restricted to prevent damage to the resources. Other terms that have been used to describe this type of reserve include "no-take" zones and fully-protected areas. The Western Sambos Reserve in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary provides an example of this type of zoning.[2]

It is important to note that not even these NAS definitions are universally accepted throughout the scientific community. Consequently the literature that forms the basis of the MPA science cannot be directly applied to the MLPAI process without first translating the terminology used in each individual reference to the definitions as set forth in the MLPA. Failure to recognize this variability in the literature can lead to incorrectly attributing a specific type of MPA (as defined in the MLPA) with characteristics that are intended for another. All participants in the MLPAI process need to be aware of these differences in terminology, and are cautioned to correctly relate the literature to the specific MPA types defined by California law.

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[2] *Ibid*, p. 11-12